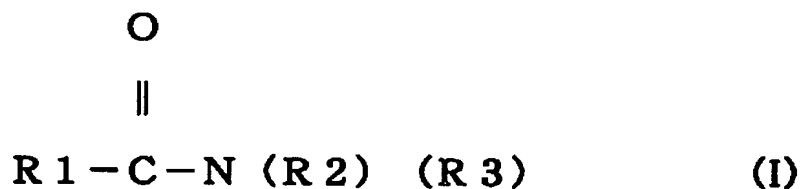


CLAIMS

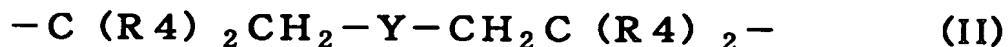
1. A thermosetting powder coating composition comprising a coating forming component which can crosslink and harden by an ester exchange reaction between a carboxylic ester group and a hydroxyl group, and an ester exchange reaction catalyst, wherein said ester exchange reaction catalyst is constituted from an organic sulfonate (X) derived from a carboxylic amide and an organic sulfonic acid having fluorine atoms.
 2. The thermosetting powder coating composition as set forth in claim 1, wherein said coating forming component contains a polymer which contains two or more hydroxyl groups and/or two or more carboxylic ester groups in one molecule.
 3. The thermosetting powder coating composition as set forth in claim 1, wherein said coating forming component is a vinyl type polymer.
 4. The thermosetting powder coating composition as set forth in any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein said carboxylic amide compound is expressed by a general formula (I)
- [Chemical 8]



wherein R1, R2 and R3 independently represents a hydrogen atom or monovalent organic group. R2 and R3 may be bonded to each other to form a divalent group expressed by a

general formula (II):

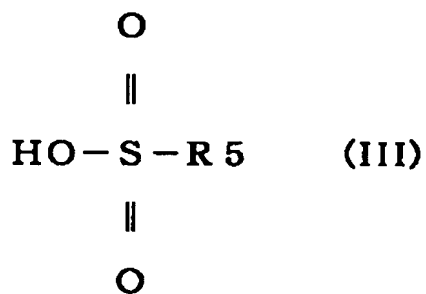
[Chemical 9]



wherein R⁴ represents a hydrogen atom or methyl group, Y represents any of a direct bond, methylene group, substituted methylene group, and oxygen atom, and R¹ and R² may be bonded to each other to form a substituted or a non-substituted alkylene group having 2 to 11 carbon atoms in total.

- 5 5. The thermosetting powder coating composition as set forth in any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein said carboxylic amide compound contains two or more
- 10 N-alkanoyl-2,2,6,6-tetramethyl piperidine-4-yl groups in one molecule.
6. The thermosetting powder coating composition as set forth in any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein said carboxylic amide compound is N-methyl-2-pyrrolidone.
- 15 7. The thermosetting powder coating composition as set forth in any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein said organic sulfonic acid having fluorine atoms is expressed by a general formula (III):

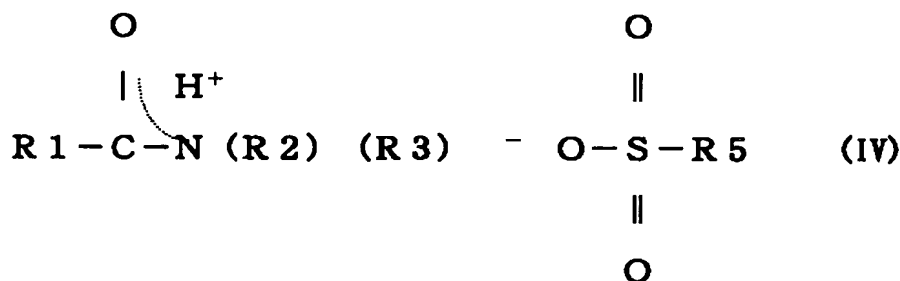
[Chemical 10]



wherein R5 represents a monovalent organic group having fluorine atoms.

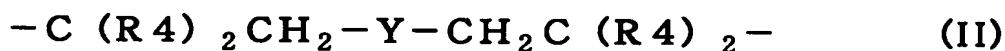
8. The thermosetting powder coating composition as set forth in any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein said organic sulfonate (X) has a structure expressed by a general formula (IV):

5 [Chemical 11]



wherein each of R1, R2 and R3 independently represents a hydrogen atom or a monovalent organic group, and R2 and R3 may be bonded to each other to form a divalent group expressed by a general formula (II):

[Chemical 12]

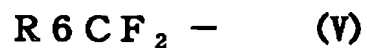


10 wherein R4 represents a hydrogen atom or methyl group, Y represents any of a direct bond, a methylene group, a substituted methylene group, and an oxygen atom, and R1 and R2 may be bonded to each other to form a substituted or a non-substituted alkylene group having carbon atoms of 2 to 11 in total, and R5 represents a monovalent organic group having fluorine atoms.

15

9. The thermosetting powder coating composition as set forth in claim 7, wherein said R5 in the general formula (III) is a monovalent organic group expressed by a general formula (V):

[Chemical 13]



wherein R₆ represents a hydrogen atom, a fluorine atom, or a substituted or non-substituted hydrocarbon group having 1 to 5 carbon atoms.

- 5 10. A hardened material obtained by applying the thermosetting powder coating composition as set forth in any one of claims 1 to 3 to a base material, and crosslinking and hardening the applied thermosetting powder coating composition.